The Unitarian Calendar

In the Greece that was, philosophers
  Walked in the garden sunny,
And searched for truth with a loving ruth,
  As the Hyblan bees sought honey.

The old Greek days are dead and gone,—
  The truth blooms fresh as ever;
As young and old and manifold,
  And open to endeavor.

—Robert Collyer.

Vol. 4 SEPTEMBER — 1911 No. 1

OUR NATIONAL SOCIETIES

With headquarters in the building of the American Unitarian Association, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

Local offices at 104 East 20th Street, New York City; 105 South Dearborn Street, Chicago, Ill., and 376 Sutter Street, San Francisco, Cal.

THE AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION

Founded in 1825.

The chief missionary organization of the Unitarian churches of America. It supports missionaries, establishes and maintains churches, holds conventions, aids in building meeting-houses, publishes books, tracts, and devotional works.

Address correspondence to the Secretary Rev. Lewis G. Wilson.

Address contributions to the Treasurer, Francis H. Lincoln, Esq.

UNITARIAN SUNDAY-SCHOOL SOCIETY

Founded in 1827.

Maintained by the Unitarian churches to promote religious and moral education. Publishes manuals and tracts, issues a Sunday-school paper, holds conventions, carries on a book-room. Branch at 105 South Dearborn Street, Chicago.

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The Unitarian Calendar

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THE FAITH OF LIBERAL CHRISTIANS

BY REV. JOSEPH P. MACCARTHY
Of the First Parish, Waltham, Mass.

The fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of man, the leadership of Jesus, salvation by character, progress onward and upward forever." These are "commonly held among us." There is no formal creed. Many churches have some simple "bond of union," such as, "We unite for the worship of God and the service of man in the spirit of Jesus."

There is no authoritative statement to which we must subscribe, because we believe in the fullest liberty and because in the nature of the human mind and soul no two persons can see religious truth exactly alike. Moreover, if we could agree upon a creed to-day, we should have to stop growing or get a new one to-morrow. Again, we are followers of Jesus, and neither he nor his disciples had a creed. The so-called "Apostles' Creed" is a product of the fifth century.

There is among liberal Christians a very general agreement on certain great principles, such as the necessary harmony of true religion and reason and the supreme authority of reason and the moral consciousness in the search after truth. We believe that God is one, not three or more; an intelligent first cause, not a blind force; powerful, wise, good, holy, the tender "Father" of all men.

We believe the fatherhood of God implies the

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brotherhood of man—all men. They differ in degrees of progress; they are at different places on the road, but they are all children of God, all destined for a divine home. This universal brotherhood includes all the prophets, — it includes Jesus, a divine "Son of Man," as he called himself. But he was so pre-eminent in his search for truth, so complete in his life, that he has become one of the great spiritual leaders of the race. He was divine as all men are divine in the degree of their perfection, but he was not deity. We reverence him and follow him, but we do not worship him. We worship one God, his Father and ours.

Salvation is a condition of progress. Man wins it for himself by being on his upward way toward a larger and fuller life. Man can be greatly helped or hindered by the example of his fellows, but he cannot be saved or lost by the merit or defect of another. If I rob Smith and spend his money and God forgives me on account of the goodness of Brown, how does that help Smith? Or where is the justice that would compel Brown to pay for that robbery? Jesus is a saviour by the greatness of his nature and by the example of his rich, unselfish life, which has become a moral inspiration to all who know of him.

Salvation is progressive. The better a man is, the better he is compelled to be. God's best saints are not in the past, but in the present and future.

Our affections and beliefs are wiser than we: the best that is in us is better than we can understand; for it is grounded beyond experience, and guides us, blindfolded and safe, from one age on to another.—*Stevenson.*

DO WE NEED TO BELIEVE?

REV. HERBERT H. MOTT,
Of the First Unitarian Church, Nashua, N. H.

To this question many people answer, No, the age of creeds is past. Now it is not necessary to believe anything.

On the other hand, many able minds take a directly opposite view. Carlyle, for instance, affirms that belief is everything. That a man is what he believes. Common sense and experience are on the side of Carlyle. Whatever is done in the world is done because of some belief. The Panama Canal will be completed only because the American nation believes its completion possible and desirable.

How much, then, do we need to believe? What is the fundamental, the essential, the vital faith? The Apostles' Creed? The Congregational Statement? The Westminster Confession? None of these can be vital, for multitudes live happily and healthily without them. Is there any belief without which we cannot be healthy and happy? Yes, we can be neither one nor the other without well-grounded confidence that a power of Goodness is supreme, or, in other words, without a firm faith in the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man. Belief in these two truths is vital for the best in life.

Be patient with every one, but above all with yourself. I mean, do not be disturbed because of your imperfections, and always rise up bravely from a fall. I am glad that you make a daily new beginning; there is no better means of progress in the spiritual life than to be continually beginning afresh, and never to think that we have done enough.—*Francis de Sales.*

REASONABLE LIMITATIONS

REV. AUGUSTUS M. LORD, D. D.,

Of the First Congregational Church, Providence, R. I.

Up to a certain point a man increases his muscular strength by exercising his muscles on given tasks over and over again. But beyond that point he must depend on the ministration of elements outside his own body, his own physical system. He must depend on air, sunshine, nourishment, which demand of him, for their perfect ministration, relaxation rather than concentration; the open, rather than the closed, strained, absorbed life.

"You'll get no good from all your running and sparring, sir, without plenty of rest," was the injunction of an old trainer of athletes, quoted in *Collier's England and the English.* "The hour's complete rest after the eight-mile spin is what makes the muscle."

Just so it is with the exercise of any faculty, whether of brain or of body. The gospel of exercise has its limitations. Beyond a certain point it spells confusion and disaster instead of strength and peace. There are times when your help must come not from plodding along the dusty road opened to you in the line of your own thought and effort, worn down by constant use, but from some suggestion out of realms of life over which your thought and effort have no control, and from the working of forces which, finding a way into your life through its relaxed tension, minister to your impulses and thoughts in ways which lie deep beneath the grasp of your consciousness.

It is for Thee alone to give. And dost Thou not love a cheerful receiver?—*Charles G. Ames.*

ALL ABOARD!

There is a series of signals, familiar to the traveling public, which marks the beginnings and ends of things in a peremptory and decisive way. "All Aboard!" "All ashore that's going ashore," and similar announcements, followed by the final and inexorable ringing of the bell, awaken all sorts of emotions in those for whom they are intended. Laughter and tears, fears and anticipations, expectation of immediate joys long delayed, the fulfilment of plans, the dread of possible disappointments, and the near proximity of achievements representing years of dreaming and of labor all wait upon the signal for the train to start and the ship to sail.

Life is full of decisive periods. The ending of anything is the signal for the beginning of something else. To achieve is but to forecast further achievements and he only need relax into a condition of suicidal despair who, beyond the moment when the train moves or the ship swings away from its mooring, can look forward to no destination where he is needed, or where he can create a demand for the expression of all the blood-red life that is in him.

Before this number of the CALENDAR meets the eyes of our Unitarian congregations many of their members will have heard the conductor on the mountain express, or the steward of some passenger steamer utter the words which will mean, "Your vacation days are numbered, the train is about to start, the ship is about to sail, the days or months of unrestrained caprice and rest are over, the itineraries you elaborated with a quickened pulse in the spring are fulfilled and you must now get down to business and prove by your renewed energy that you are worthy to have had such advantages."

It is often that a business man terminates his

vacation with a sigh of relief and feels really happier when he gets back to his desk than at any time during his vacation. It is sometimes true that the "average woman" returns to her home with a feeling of infinite peace, thankful beyond expression that she possesses a home of her own, where flunkies cease from troubling and landlords are at rest, and where she can minister to the needs of her family in something like a decent ratio to the love she bears its members.

If some such sensations possess us when we return to our work-a-day world, we may set it down as a fact that the vacation has been worth while. But there is one peculiar danger which sometimes threatens a "vacation," which we will all do well to heed. It may increase our physical strength, it may give us an excellent "tan," it may brace our courage for the conflict of the street; but unless we are on our guard, it may contribute nothing towards our enthusiasm for the maintenance of our church. Having been relieved of all responsibilities of a spiritual nature during the summer, it is easy to ignore them after the summer is ended. It sometimes requires downright resolution to resume that attitude on the seventh day of the week which is so easy to adopt on the other six. Fortunate, indeed, is that minister whose parishioner, when he hears the cry, "All Aboard!" and the stroke of the bell which follows it, understands the signal to mean, "Now for the employment of my *best* self! Now for my duty as a good man of affairs, now for my interest as a good citizen, now for my co-operation in all good works; but, most important of all, now for my attention to the fountains of life, whose flowing forth for the quickening of the world's heart and the revival of the world's spiritual vitality, depends upon my appreciation of the deepest needs of humanity."

L. G. W.

WHO'S GOING TO CHURCH?

REV. SAMUEL B. STEWART,

Pastor Emeritus of the Second Congregational Society, Lynn, Mass

"Who's going to church?" Was it the question at the breakfast table? Did someone interrupt you reading your morning paper? Is father going? Is mother? Are the children dressed, and have they been to breakfast? Are they going?

Who's going to church? Think one moment seriously. Is that really a right sort of question to ask? Ought not going to church to be taken for granted, as we take for granted going to school, going to work, going to any duty or pleasure? Why make an exception? Why put it in the category of inconsequentials, occasionals, accidentals, as one may snatch a holiday if one can get his affairs fixed, or take an evening for a neighborly visit? Isn't it a misconception, a mistake? Isn't this instinct of worship the most beautiful, after all, in the whole constitution of man? And are not the memorials of it, in art and song and prayer and charity, the most precious of all memorials of the human family?

Why do we go to church? We go for impressions; for pure and sacred associations; for a feeling, a culture we cannot get elsewhere. We do not go wholly for doctrine, for ceremony; we go because it is beautiful to rest from the thought and care of the world. It is God's house we enter; and all the presences, all the voices, are pure and holy. Is it not best for even little children to begin with these impressions, these sacred associations, this pure atmosphere, this culture they cannot get elsewhere, these influences whose impact upon the mind, the soul, the heart, are eternally good—to begin early?

The church is of just as much consequence in the economy of your lives as anything you can name. You do not need a newspaper one whit

more than you need a sermon. It is as important that you go to church as that you rest from labor, or write your absent son or daughter a long, affectionate letter this very day. Your children need the influence of worship as much as they need the art of reading. You may think you yourselves are getting on in life just as well without the incentives and consolations of religion ministered through the church; but you cannot, and never will.

Who's going to church, then? Why, everybody! Going to church should be taken for granted. No question about it need be asked, no question expected. Every one in the family is going—every one! Going to church should be as natural as going to breakfast, as going to school, as going to work.

My counsel is, Do not ask it any more.

Equality of rank there can never be; equality of wealth there can never be; equality of intellect there can never be; equality of influence there can never be. Such is the ordinance of God's providence. In the will of a man, as in the world of nature, there must always be the molehills as well as the mountains, and the thistles as well as the forest trees. But equality of hopes, equality of aims, equality of essential happiness, equality of pure and true thoughts, there may be; and equality of common destiny there is.—*Christian Life.*

Give me good work to do, that I may forget myself and find peace in doing it for Thee. Though I am poor, send me to carry some gift to those who are poorer, some cheer to those who are more lonely.—*Henry Van Dyke.*

UNITARIAN HYMN

God's trumpet wakes the slumbering world;
Now, each man to his post!
The red-cross banner is unfurled;
Who joins the glorious host?

He who, in fealty to the Truth,
And counting all the cost,
Doth consecrate his generous youth,—
He joins the noble host!

He who, with calm, undaunted will,
Ne'er counts the battle lost,
But, though defeated, battles still,—
He joins the faithful host!

He who is ready for the cross,
The cause despised loves most,
And shuns not pain or shame or loss,—
He joins the martyr host!

—*Samuel Longfellow.*

THE CHURCH AND SOCIAL REFORM

REV. ALBERT R. VAIL,
Of the Unitarian Church, Urbana, Ill.

The present social agitation has brought out two oft-forgotten truths concerning the Church and its mission. First, we, as individuals, organize ourselves into churches, not only to get but to give. Common worship is a means to united service. Second, our churches are in the midst of society, not as a refuge for her wounded ones, but as an army fighting to transform her. To acquiesce in present conditions and cry, "Peace, peace," is moral death. Surrender to the world and we perish; redeem her and we live.

Truly we must lend a hand toward securing

for the worker freedom from child-labor, murderous tenements and starvation wages. Few workers can be made spiritual upon empty stomachs. Some industrial reform is therefore a first step to the kingdom of God. But if that alone be our message, how shall we differ from Socialistic Local or Labor Union? We stand alone in society for the education not of bodies or intellects, but souls. We are committed to a social revolution beside which all others are as child's play, namely, this: to transform factory, Legislature, school, home, into the celestial pattern of the Sermon on the Mount.

How may that revolution be effected in the present pagan world? Not by a change in the industrial system alone. No industrial environment, however perfect, will destroy greed and selfishness and produce a Kingdom of God. That will come only through the regeneration of individual souls. The methods of Jesus have not yet been surpassed. We must convert the world into the Kingdom of God by the "foolishness of preaching" and teaching. If we faint before the infinite ideal perhaps we shall need to learn better to pray together. Then in our common worship the infinite God will equip us for the infinite task.

It is no great matter to associate with the good and gentle, for this is naturally pleasing to all, and every one willingly enjoyeth peace and loveth those best that agree with him. But to be able to live peaceably with hard and perverse persons, or with the disorderly, or with such as go contrary to us, is a great grace, and a most commendable and manly thing.—*Thomas à Kempis.*

Religion is not a label, but an element of character. It is not a declaration, but a life.—*John C. Learned.*

JESUS AS AN EXAMPLE

REV. HILARY BYGRAVE

Upon Jesus and upon us all demands are made from which there ought to be and can be no exemption. God's best treasures must be paid for at full cost, and if we fail to meet the demand, or pay the price, we miss our truest growth and glory, drop behind among the dunces, the sluggards and the cowards, and certain things have to wait for fulfilment until those are found who know how to suffer and, if need be, die, but not how to retreat from or stifle the best impulses of their souls. In Jesus, we have the sublime example of one who suffered for Truth's sake and the love of humanity and the coming of the kingdom of God in the world. Through his example, thousands have learned how to suffer and die, but not how to deny, or be false or half-hearted to the sacred imperatives of life; through him they have learned to trust in God, though God himself seemed to be slaying them, to believe in the love and care of God amid darkness as dense and deep as despair, and when heaven was as silent as the grave.

There is a temptation in the wilderness that every soul must meet, and faint and stagger under, in some form or other. But here, on the other side, is God standing silently at the door all day long,—God, whispering to the soul that to be pure and true is to succeed in life, and whatever we get short of that will burn up like stubble.—*Robert Collyer.*

IS IT TRUE?

REV. SAMUEL M. CROTHERS, D. D.,
Of the First Parish, Cambridge, Mass.

It is a great deal easier to say that we will take what, according to the judgment of someone else, is good enough for us than it is to judge for ourselves. The great foe which the Roman Catholic Church is meeting to-day is what it very wisely calls "Modernism." It is inclined to give a technical sense to that word. The attitude of the modern man is that which challenges every kind of religion. We may turn our backs upon it and go back to former standards, but the fact remains that the world is coming more and more under what we call "Modernism." Last week I was profoundly touched and influenced by that great procession in the streets of Boston—the first great exhibition of the real religion of the masses of the community in which we live to-day. No one could look upon it without seeing that the Boston we see and live in is very different from the Boston that we read about,—not a Puritan city, not an Anglo-Saxon city, but a Roman Catholic community. It seemed a triumph of what we are accustomed to consider a reactionary form of faith. Then I seemed to see, in my imagination, marching through the streets of our city, another army,—the army of education, all the children of our public schools, our colleges, our institutions of learning. "Here we are," they seemed to say; "this is the force which *we* represent." What is the force which every such school represents? It is a force in which every form of mere authority slowly disintegrates—necessarily so—because you are teaching these children not to believe in the spoken word of another; but to believe in the fact, in the truth, in the reason of things. And were I a Roman Catholic, I should tremble as I thought of that silent conflict, as the wisest of

them *do* tremble when they think of it. What of religion when all men—not a few, but all the masses of men—learn to think; when they ask themselves, not, What does the Church teach? but, Is it true? Is it true that there is an infallible authority? Is it true that there is a dreadful hell, and that those who do not obey the priest go into it? Is it true that to one man sitting in a distant city has been entrusted the key to heaven? Is it true that "whatsoever he binds here shall be bound there; and whatsoever he looses here shall be loosed there?" Is that true? Is it true that there has been through all these ages a holy church, a church so holy that it has been miraculously preserved through all history? Or, instead, is it true that the history of the church is but a history of the world? The Church has made many a grievous mistake. Is it true that when the priest speaks to the sinner and says, "I absolve you," that all his sins are washed away; that the man is indeed absolved from the guilt that is his? Or must he personally work out his own salvation with fear and trembling? It isn't any direct attack which education makes. It is simply the method by which, in every true school, the pupils are taught to speak truth and to test it before it is accepted. We must admit that before we can have a true experiment of religion in its purity, religion itself must leave the bulwarks of external authority. How many of these people would have followed had they been relieved of all this pressure of inherited belief?

Courage for the great sorrows of life and patience for the small ones, and then, when you have accomplished your daily task, go to sleep in peace. God is awake.—*Victor Hugo.*

THE INCARNATION

REV. WILLIAM S. JONES,

Of the Channing Memorial Church, Newport, R. I.

If we know and see men through knowing and seeing the spirit and purpose of their works, can we not know and see God through knowing and seeing His revelation in our humanity? In all men and women who are constantly striving, even with many failures and lapses, for a higher good than present experience affords, do we not behold the manifestation of a Spirit and a Purpose so infinitely richer and stronger and purer than our own that we are driven to the conclusion that it is God who besets us behind and before and lays His hands upon us? "The Indwelling God proclaimed of old" is not far away from any one of us. We respond to His drawing power whenever we rise to higher levels of righteousness and truth. We yield to His promptings whenever we go down into the depths to lift up the fallen and to relieve the oppressed and to redeem the unfortunate. We show forth His pity whenever we are moved with compassion for the erring. "All hearts that struggle and aspire by Thee are lit." All minds that are consumed with a passion for truth are mirrors of the Divine. All spirits that yearn for a vital sense of life eternal are witnesses of a life immeasurably vaster than this and of a Power infinitely greater than man. He who has seen the highest humanity striving to go higher has seen the Father of all and in all men. Now we understand what Jesus means when he says, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." He is not thereby proclaiming himself to be God. Never does he do that. He is simply, in all reverence and humility, uttering his absolute conviction that his life is a revelation of the life of God in the soul of man. He knows that the Father is with him and in him, in every trial and under

every woe, and, therefore, like a grateful son he bears witness to God's abiding presence. To those who cry, "Show us the Father," he shows his own life of human brotherhood as a revelation of the Divine Fatherhood. He holds up his own life of justice and mercy and self-sacrifice, and in it we see, not as in a glass darkly, but as in a clear, shining mirror, the life and love and purpose of God.

Do right, and God's recompense to you will be the power of doing more right. Give, and God's reward to you will be the spirit of giving more,—a blessed spirit, for it is the Spirit of God himself, whose Life is the blessedness of giving. Love, and God will pay you with the capacity of more love; for love is heaven—love is God within you. —*F. W. Robertson.*

NOTES

The corner-stone of the new church for the Society at Marblehead, Mass., was laid on Aug. 20th. The new building will probably be ready before winter.

Extensive alterations and improvements are being made this summer on the interior of the Arlington Street Church, in Boston. Almost all Unitarians are familiar with the noble building where the Society worships which enjoyed the leadership of Channing, Gannett and Herford. The new decoration will be especially handsome.

Five veterans of the Unitarian ministry have died during the summer: Rev. R. R. Shippen, who was the minister through a long and fortunate career at Worcester, Chicago, Washington and Brockton, and also Secretary of the American Unitarian Association; Rev. S. H. Winkley, for sixty-five years minister and minister emeritus of the Bulfinch Place Chapel, in Boston; Rev. J. W. Quinby, for thirty years minister at East Bridgewater; Rev. W. G. Babcock, and Rev. W. S. Burton, who retired many years ago.

Mr. E. D. Johnson, who has just graduated at the Harvard Divinity School, has accepted a call to become the minister of the First Church in Salem. Rev. G. W. Fuller has resigned his pastorate at Spokane, Wash., to become the librarian of the City Library. Rev. George Kent of Providence has accepted a call to the charge of the Unitarian Church in New Orleans, La.

The new churches for the Third Society in Cambridge and for the Society in West Somerville are rapidly nearing completion and will be dedicated this fall. The new church in Duluth, Minn., is to be dedicated on Oct. 1st. Rev. L. G. Wilson, Secretary of the American Unitarian Association, will preach the dedication sermon. The Minnesota Conference will meet in the church on the days following the dedication.

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